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Testimony on Operating Budget Bill 11 (2014), CD2
For Fiscal Year 2014

Presented to the Honolulu City Council
Wednesday, June 5, 2013

By Lisa Tamashiro
Adult Friends for Youth
Clinical Specialist

Chairman and Members of the City Council, I am here to testify in support of the Grant-In-Aid proposal in Bill 11 (2014), CD2 for Adult Friends for Youth. This bill will allow Adult Friends for Youth to provide counseling services, programs, events, and activities for at-risk youth at Farrington, Campbell, Kapolei, and Leilehua.

I am currently working at Adult Friends for Youth as a clinical specialist and co-teacher for the C-Based program. Having been part of the agency for four years, I have been exposed to many of the challenges and obstacles our youth face day-to-day. It is truly troubling to see all the roles the youths juggle to barely survive their teen years in which are crucial to their development as contributing members of society. However, given a loving and nurturing environment, I have seen youth grow and make the best of the opportunities provided to them. When the youth begin to see and believe in their potential, they are able to confront the issues thrown at them such as poverty, violence, substance abuse, academic failure, truancy, bullying, gang involvement, negative relationships and more. Many of the youth are vulnerable to such negative and destructive behaviors that it is essential the youth can have a place where they feel safe and that somebody does care about their well-being. The staff of Adult Friends for Youth works tirelessly as a team to build meaningful relationships and provide appropriate services so that the youth can begin to envision a life beyond their community and apart from many of the negative influences surrounding them. The youths served at Adult Friends for Youth are the upcoming generation and it is important that we give them the opportunity for their voice to be heard.

I sincerely ask that you support Bill 11 CD2 as it will provide the financial means for youth to obtain the services necessary to assist them in becoming productive members of the Hawaii community.

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